

What Is Social Justice? The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas

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Journal # 1: What Is Social Justice? (The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas)

In response to the concept of utilitarianism, the author, Ursula K. Le Guin, makes up an ideal or a fantasy land known as Omelas. Smiles have become outdated or ancient here since they have become universal now. But this happiness faded when it was realized that there exists an unhappy or miserable kid who does not possess any moral sentiments toward the residents of Omelas, which made some of them leave the land.

In my opinion, social justice lies in a democracy where every individual is given equal importance. The solution of locking up Omelas or the acceptance of a miserable child was the extreme or I must say immoral solution. Hence, a democratic society is the ultimate solution where all people are treated equally so that no one would feel miserable or left out. All people must go through the pain and suffering of their share, and no specific person must be victimized. True happiness lies in social justice. When all the individuals share their happiness and miserable times with each other and provide one another with equal opportunities and chances, a system of equality and justice is then established. The story is based on the idea that the happiness of the residents of Omelas depends on the [suffering of a child](#). This does not indicate a socially just solution. The freedom and happiness of the child are as important as the happiness of the other residents of Omelas. Thus, being happy in someone's suffering is absolute selfishness.

Journal # 2: Race (Caged Bird)

The poem "Caged Bird" by Maya Angelou talks about the racial discrimination between whites and blacks. I think the way she conveys the message without directly mentioning any race is influential. The segregation or partition among different races has always been an issue, and many people, authors, and poets have talked about how to change their mindsets and come out of this discussion of superiority and inferiority. The era of white supremacy has always restricted the rights of African Americans. It became a tradition or a custom that blacks will always be submissive to whites. Thus, with the passage of time, many influential blacks then stood up for their rights and against inequality and violence towards the black community. In the poem, 'free bird' refers to the whites, while the black is a 'caged bird.' The conclusion of the first stanza of the poem, where the poetess says, "And dares to claim the sky," refers to the inequality and oppression that the whites claim over the blacks.

The poem perfectly demonstrates the contrasts and differences between the two birds or the two races. I believe that there must not be any discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, age, or sex. All human beings must be treated equally and given equal rights. Racial discrimination is one of the threats to the successful development of the nation. When people are not given their rights, a time comes when they stand up for their rights, and then they aim to do anything they can to get free. And I think at that time, all of their actions are justifiable. These actions can also cause disruption and disturbance in the law and order of the state. Hence, the government and influential figures must not encourage racial discrimination.

Journal # 3: Gender (The Story Of An Hour)

“The Story of an Hour” by Kate Chopin, through her story, makes readers aware of how gender discrimination and gender roles work. The idea of freedom and independence a wife has after hearing the news of her husband’s death is awkward, strange, and immoral in the minds of society. (Le Guin, 1973) I believe that the ties of marriage are bounding and restricting for both husband and wife in one way or the other. However, when the wife dies, the husband opts for a second marriage and is not finger-pointed. On the other hand, if the husband dies, the woman is not supposed to feel happy and free since she has become a widow and has no right to be happy after her husband’s death. No one realizes the fact that marital ties can be disturbing and oppressive, which becomes the reason behind the happiness of one party over the death or the separation from another. Even though the husband is loving and caring, a woman always realizes the men in her life that she’s weak and has to depend on them for everything. This bitter reality is beautifully depicted in Kate Chopin’s story. Women are never thought to be strong enough to lead their lives independently. It’s not about how women don’t like the involvement of any man in their lives, but it’s regarding the fact that men impose their opinions and beliefs on women and want them to follow the same.

Journal # 4: Poverty (A Letter To God)

Sometimes, extreme poverty leads people to do some strange deeds, such as writing a letter to God. A farmer whose crops get destroyed by a hailstorm writes a letter to God and asks for money. The postman reads the letter, gets emotional, and sends the money to the farmer. This is an innocent action done by a poor farmer who’s also not educated. Other than this, poverty also leads people to become criminals and bad people. They tend to do things like robbery, murder, etc. The unequal distribution of wealth establishes injustice and poverty in the community. This leads to the notion of corruption, ultimately leading to a corrupt society. The story also depicts faith in God and how a poor farmer asks for help from no one but God. But this aspect isn’t mostly found in all poor communities. Extreme poverty leads to frustration, which in turn leads to a disrupted society in which poverty, illiteracy, and starvation are prevalent. I think the story signifies that rich or upper-class people must not exploit or take advantage of the poor society. Rather, they must open chances and opportunities for them and help them get out of their lives full of poverty and deprivation. People should be as

generous and empathetic as the postman in the story. Hence, starvation and unavailability of the essentials make a person something that he's not or that he does not intend to be. In such situations, a poor person either chooses to tolerate the deprivation or moves toward the wrong path for survival.

Journal # 5: Education (Indian Education)

"Indian Education" by Sherman Alexie is his life story describing the nature of his tribe and how people treated them. He left his residence and moved to a different place for education. We often observe this idea of moving from place to place and leaving one's home for the gain of education. The tribe from which Alexie belonged was considered to be the least of tribes, and therefore, he was treated in a wrong and discriminative way throughout his course of education. Children who leave their homes and move to a different place for the sake of education suffer from a lot of problems and difficulties. They do not feel comfortable in a new environment, particularly when people there think inferior of them, their families, and their whole tribe. This is also what Alexie went through. The system of education, as described by Alexie in his life story, can also be seen in real life. Many children go through what Alexie went through in the new school just because he was an Indian. Educational systems have become greedy and racist. They give attention to the students who are rich and belong to their race or country. Equality of educational rights can't be seen anywhere. Many people also don't have the privilege to exercise this right. Those who get it suffer from different problems that these modern educational systems throw in their way.

Journal # 6: Refugees (The Displaced Person)

I believe what the author Flannery O'Connor tries to depict in her story "The Displaced Person" is true and real. (Mill, 1863/2004) The treatment of refugees is never so good in any state or country they move to. The arrival of refugees evokes sentiments of hatred, possessiveness, and even a racist attitude toward the refugees in the countrymen. We believe that this unwanted arrival disturbs the order and peace of our country. The threat of terrorism increases, and economic conditions are disturbed. Though these factors are valid, we don't consider the other side of the problem. We are unable to comprehend and understand their feelings and what they have gone through. The feelings of alienation in another country are the worst feeling anyone can ever go through. Going to a foreign country for an education or job is something different than being a refugee. Being a refugee means that the distressing conditions in one's country, such as an ongoing war, have led the person to run or flee from his state and seek protection in another state which refuses to accept him or, if it does, the treatment from the people is completely disturbing and distressing. "The Displaced Person" also highlights the treatment of the refugees and how the owners of the farm belittled them. No sentiments of sympathy have been shown towards them.

Journal # 7: Penalty Of Death (Sonnets Upon The Punishment Of Death)

“Sonnets upon the Punishment of Death” by William Wordsworth has been an ongoing debate since that time. Many states have abolished capital punishment. Wordsworth was against the abolition of capital punishment for different reasons. I believe capital punishment must not be abolished. The reason I opionate this is because of the increasing level of crimes, and no one is aware of how and what kind of punishment the offenders are being given. When the deadly criminals are capitally punished, the people of the society get an idea that if someone from them attempted the same or any crime, he or she would also receive the punishment like this. Some writers or poets were against the stance of Wordsworth, such as Thackeray, who witnessed an incident of a public hanging. He then explained its horrors in his works and wanted such things to end. I think the most horrifying punishments must not be publicly advertised, but the public hanging is completely fine. In this way, the self-esteem of the criminal is also destroyed, and they may feel guilty about it. The people watching him take the lesson for themselves that if they did the same thing, they would also be hanged in the same manner. I agree with the poet William Wordsworth on the stance that the state must be given a right to execute the proven criminals whose crimes are unforgivable such as rapes, murders, etc.

References

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